Ministry of Defence raising serious objections about an American warship "USS Bowditch" spying consistently for several months in 2002-2003 and carrying out unauthorised exercises off the Vishakapatnam coast well inside India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ); and

(b) if so, the action Government propose to take against the American warship for this illegal act against international rules?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Constitution of a commission for Ex-servicemen

†2246. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for constituting a Commission to formulate a comprehensive policy with a view to study and sort out the problems of ex-servicemen; and

(b) if so, the details of steps to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Crash of MIG and Mirage Jet Fighters

2247. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many MIG and Mirage Jet Fighter Planes have crashed in the last five years;

(b) the number of pilots killed in such mishaps; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto and the preventive action taken to avert such mishaps?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) A

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

total number of 76 MIG aircrafts crashed during the period 1st April, 1999 till 31st March, 2004. No Mirage Jet fighter aircraft crashed during the above period.

(b) 35 pilots were killed in these accidents.

(c) A continuous and multi-faceted effort is always afoot in Indian Air Force to enhance and upgrade flight safety. Measures to enhance the quality of training to improve the skill levels, ability to exercise sound judgment and situational awareness of pilots are being pursued.

Constant interaction with Hindustan Aeronatuics Limited (HAL) and Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) of concerned countries are also maintained to overcome the technical defects of aircraft. Besides, anti-bird measures are also undertaken.

Border roads in Jammu and Kashmir

2248. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the length of border roads passing through Jammu and Kashmir at present;

(b) whether the length of border roads in J&K is far less as compared to other States;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to increase the length of border roads in J&K, if so, the details thereof and funds allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The length of border roads under construction/maintenance in Jammu & Kashmir is 5900 Kms.

(b) No, Sir. In fact J&K has the maximum length of roads being maintanined/constructed by the Border Roads Organisation.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Construction of another 600 Kms of road in J&K is at the initial stage of planning. Allocation of funds at this stage is premature.